

A Walk Through La Crosse River Marsh, by Emily Hutwagner

Stepping onto the trail, I enter a world of only the marsh and me. The pressure and anxiety leave for a brief time as my ears fine tune with the chirps of crickets and hum of cicadas. I pick up certain calls: the quick chirp of a red-winged black bird as it whizzes past, the loud honk from a goose searching for food in the muck. The tremor from a passing train reminds me of the world beyond, calling me back to the reality I am not ready to answer. Light rain drops kiss my cheek. More caress my arm. The marshy surface scatters with small halos as sky meets water. A laugh begins to bubble as the rain taps me playfully. I ignore my raincoat and umbrella, brought in anticipation, and relish the rain's cool touch. I become one with the world around me— as we get wet with the same drops — nature's way of joining us all.

